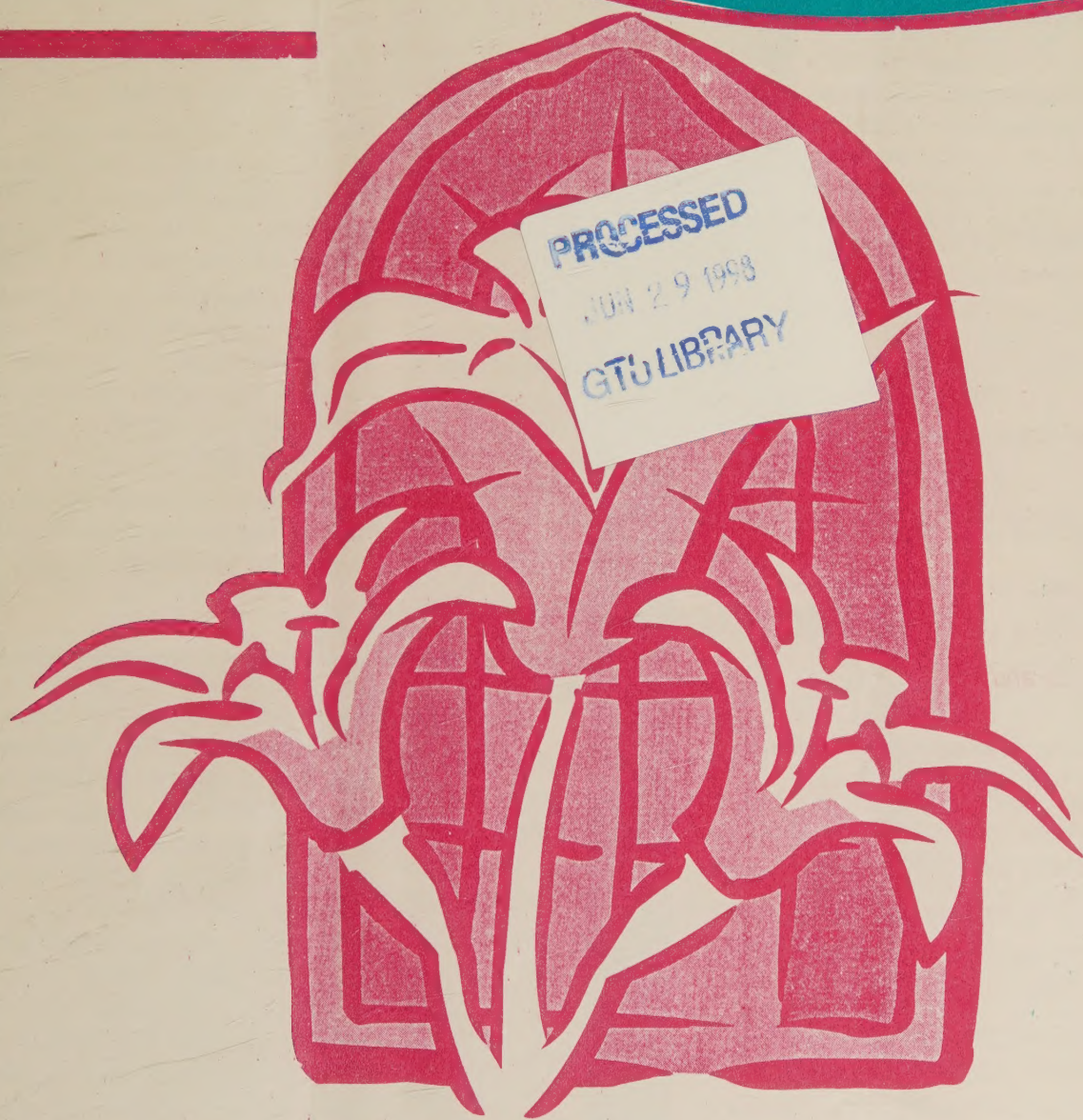




The South India CHURCHMAN

The magazine of the Church of South India

APRIL 1998



Inside

- Moderator's Easter Message
- Happy Birthday WCC
- The Holy Eucharist

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

April 1998

"The Gospels do not explain the resurrection; the resurrection explains the Gospels. Belief in the resurrection is not an appendage to the Christian faith; it is the Christian faith.

(J.S. Whale)

"The resurrection did not result in a committee with a chairman, but in a fellowship with an experience.

(Anon)

Easter's meaning for those who formerly were without hope and without a true direction in life is a source of every-recurring wonder. Some of the effects of Christ's Resurrection were eloquently described nearly 1,600 years ago by St. John Chrysostom in his Easter Message.

'Those who were formerly living in the shame of sin are now living in confidence and in justice.

'They are not only free, but saints;

'Not only saints but just men;

'Not only just men but sons;

'Not only sons but heirs;

'Not only heirs but brothers of Christ;

'Not only brother of Christ but his co-heirs;

'Not only co-heirs, but His members;

'Not only His members, but temples;

'Not only temples, but instruments of the Holy Spirit'.

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THE SOUTH INDIA CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India.

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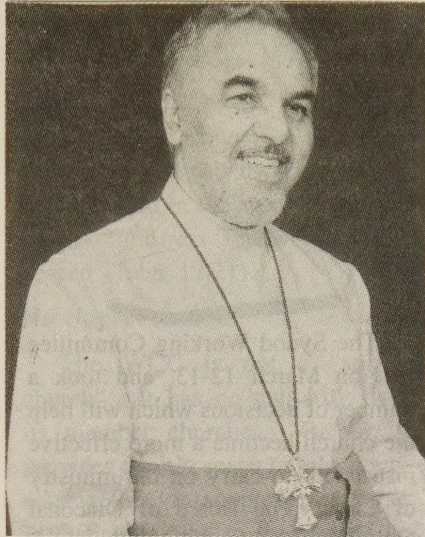
EASTER MESSAGE

The basic meaning of the Resurrection is the liberation of Jesus Christ. John Masefield in his play tells in imagination how Procla, the wife of Pilate, sent for Longinus, the centurion in charge of the crucifixion, and asked him what happened. 'He was a fine young man,' said Longinus, 'but when we were finished with him, he was a poor broken thing on a cross.' 'So you think,' said Procla, 'that he is finished and ended?' 'No, madam, I do not' said Longinus, 'He is set free throughout the world where neither Jew nor Greek can stop his truth.'

When we say 'He is risen' we acknowledge in our own life the profound transformation of the Jesus of history into the Christ of faith. Our Lord who was conditioned by time and space through his incarnation has now become a cosmic presence that transcends all physical limitations as a result of which we are able to call our Lord, Abba, Father *here and now*.

Easter means Life, a living God who is always present with us able to help us. That should fill us with

Hope. He is a living God, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is your God and my God.



Easter also means, no matter what, good always triumphs in the end. But please note the triumph comes through death and defeat! Can anyone call the death on the cross a success? It is nothing but disaster! That is why Peter and Judas and other disciples abhorred it and wanted Jesus to avoid it! Our Gospel can never be a prosperity

Gospel! But the saga of the Cross is the saga of Hope! As we struggle in our own lives for justice and peace our path may be strewn with thorns of conflicts and thistles of disappointments and failures, shame and disgrace! But we can never lose hope that in the end righteousness and love will always prevail. Death and defeat may stare us on our face. But in the end there shall always be life! This is what the Cross of Christ teaches us. Easter means Life, it means Hope; Easter means Victory!

It is my prayer that this risen Lord will appear to you also as he did to Mary Magdalene and others and fill you with peace and love and touch your life that it may forever be transformed into life everlasting. I also pray that your interaction with the Risen Lord be an experience to lead you on with courage, confidence and hope as you prepare yourself and the people around you to enter into the next millennium in another 20 months.

The Lord is risen! Indeed He is risen!

Yours in His Service,
The Most. Rev. William Moses
Moderator

A WORD OF CAUTION!

We are grieved to find that some persons are going around creating confusion and misunderstanding among the devout and faithful of the Church of South India claiming to represent the so-called Anglican Church of India. As the presiding bishop of the Church of South India, along with my brother bishops it is my duty to bring to the attention of the devout and faithful, the real picture as revealed in the letter dated Mar 20, 1998 sent to us by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

"We have no knowledge of any separate Anglican Diocese of North Tamilnadu" or of a distinct "Anglican Church of India". Both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Anglican Consultative Council understand and recognize the Anglican tradition in India has been subsumed in the United Churches of North and South India from the time of their creation."

John L. Peterson
Secretary General
The Anglican Communion

This letter is self-explanatory. The Archbishop has assured us of his assistance in matters relating to claims by the so called Anglicans who create problems in some dioceses. He had already issued a statement in Delhi, while he was in India in 1995, to the effect that the Anglican Church does not have any jurisdiction in India and that it has transferred all its properties in India to the Church of South India and Church of North India.

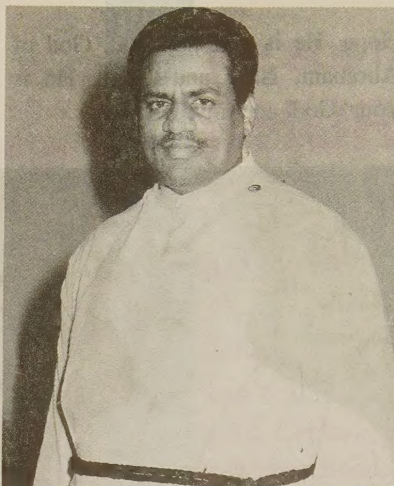
May God, the Holy Spirit bless and abide with you all.

The Most Rev. William Moses
Moderator, CSI

A Word from your General Secretary

As we enter the climax of the Lenten season, all of us are reminded of the hectic period in the life of our Lord. Every day in the last week in which the crucifixion was the central event he was to be busy doing things both for the sake of his Father and for the world. It is in this context we are reminded of our own tasks laid on our shoulders in a variety of responsibilities which are to be done with utmost sincerity and dedication. The result of such commitment was blessed by God, the Father through the resurrection event which becomes the pivotal event for the whole world.

The Church in India has entered into an atmosphere of apprehension about the new political and national situation. The church must accept it as a given situation and make an effort to witness to the resurrected Lord.



The Synod Working Committee met on March 12-13, and took a number of decisions which will help the church become a more effective instrument to carry on the ministry of Christ. The Board of Diaconal Ministries is one such effort which was initiated by the Moderator and a few friends both in India and Germany. It is expected to serve the grass root level communities of South India.

We had with us Mr. Erik Apelgardh, the educational adviser from the Church of Swedish Mission and through our mutual exchange of ideas we realized that a shared ministry was possible in Tamil dioceses as the CSM is already working in areas ministered to by the TELC. We feel in the area of continuing education for the pastors and in community building there is tremendous scope for cooperation between the CSI and the CSM.

As we began the new biennium a number of committees and councils are meeting and we look forward to receiving many more blessings from these deliberations. As we move towards the Easter let us pray earnestly for the renewal of our church that it may be filled with the hope of new life and blaze a glorious trail as we move towards the third millennium.

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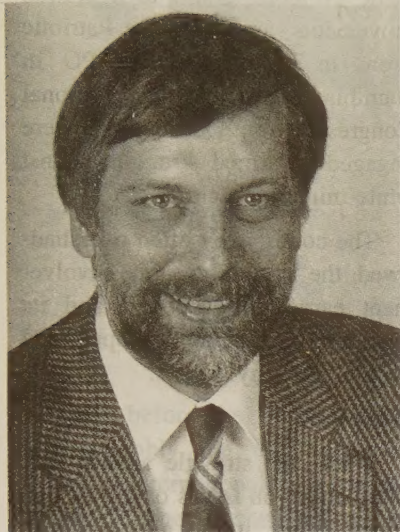
If you need further clarifications, you may contact

DPHM Co-ordinator
Chaplaincy Dept, CMC & Hospital
Vellore. TN 632 004, India.

WCC 50th Anniversary and Eighth Assembly at Harare, Zimbabwe, December 3-14, 1998

HAPPY BIRTHDAY WCC

Marlin VanElderén*



Founded in Amsterdam on 23 August 1948 by representatives from 147 churches, the World Council of Churches turns 50 this year.

As delegates from its member churches prepare to mark this jubilee in December at the WCC's eighth assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe, what events and development during the Council's first five decades have shaped its life?

Why was the WCC formed?

The WCC's constitution describes it as a "fellowship of churches".

Over the centuries, the separate existence of these divided churches has led to mutual suspicion, tension and sometimes even violent conflict. Most of the time they have gone their own way, isolated from and ignorant of each other.

The conviction grew in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that this disunity contradicts the historic Christian confession that the church is one and diminishes the credibility

of Christian witness in a divided world.

The World Council of Churches was formed to call the churches to make visible in the world the unity of his followers for which Jesus prayed (John 17:21).

No Super-church:

The WCC is not a "super-church". It has no authority over its member churches. Rather, it provides them a space to take counsel together, to support each other in difficult times, to join forces on common concerns and so grow together towards unity.

The broad lines of the WCC's agenda are set by assemblies of delegates from all member churches, which meet every seven years.

While each assembly has seen more churches represented than the previous one - there are now - the more significant growth has come in the diversity of member churches. In 1948, two-thirds of them were headquartered in Europe and North America; today, two-thirds come from Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific.

Diversity

The Council's third assembly in New Delhi in 1961 offered two important symbols of this increasing diversity.

- it received into membership four Orthodox churches from Eastern and Central Europe, including the Russian Orthodox (now the

largest member church). Several Orthodox churches already belonged to the WCC, indeed, the first official church proposal to form a body like the WCC had come from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Constantinople in 1920. But the decision of these other Orthodox churches to join the WCC confirmed its intention to be more than a Protestant fellowship and to overcome the political divisions of the Cold war.

- New Delhi also attested to the broadening of the fellowship by welcoming a large number of churches from the South. The increasing presence of churches from parts of the world where Christianity is growing most rapidly has inevitably affected the WCC's agenda.

While the largest church in the world, the Roman Catholic Church, kept its distance from the WCC in the early years, the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) made a clear commitment to seek unity with "Separated brothers and sisters".

In the years after the Uppsala assembly (1968), many people even hoped the Catholic Church might become a WCC member. After long discussion, this did not happen. But the WCC and the Catholic Church do work closely together in many areas, especially through official Catholic membership of the WCC's Faith and Order Commission.

Most of the Council's founding churches came from the major historic traditions of the Protestant

* He is the Executive Editor, WCC Publications

Reformation - Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Reformed and the like. But some churches from newer christian traditions have also joined. Among those to become members in New Delhi were two Pentecostal churches in Chile. The first to join of several independent churches in Africa (churches not originating in Western missions) was the five-million-member Kibanguist Church (Democratic republic of Congo), in 1969.

Keeping the vision alive

The council has brought together the vision of three earlier movements for church unit, which focused on (1) overcoming divisions in the churches' missionary work, (2) examining their doctrinal differences (Faith and Order) and (3) working together for a just and peaceful society (Life and Work).

Much of the early dynamism came from conferences, organisations and informal gatherings of youth and students, whose enthusiasm for breaking down ancient barriers was often a spur to more cautious church leaders.

Major global meetings in these three areas have been milestones of the WCC's first 50 years. They have been accompanied by numerous studies drawing on the experience and wisdom of churches worldwide.

Mission

Mission conferences in Mexico City (1963), Bangkok (1973), Melbourne (1980), San Antonio (1989) and Salvador de Bahia (1996) called churches to overcome the idea of mission as a one-way movement from "Christian" to "non-Christian" countries, to take up the challenges of living in community with people of other faiths, to link their verbal proclamation of the gospel with engagement in the struggles of

communities against oppression, poverty and hunger, to recognize and affirm the differences in how Christians express and live out the gospel in different cultures.

Faith and Order

The best-known work of Faith and Order is its 1982 text on Baptisms, Eucharist and Ministry. The fruit of many years of discussion, it records growing common understanding of these three central but often divisive aspects of the Christian faith.

Life and Work

A key event in the Life and Work tradition was the Council's 1966 World Conference on Church and Society in Geneva.

Much of its agenda was taken up by the WCC's fourth assembly in Uppsala (1968), which responded to the revolutionary climate of the 1960's through commitments to an active - sometimes controversial - engagement in social, economic and political issues which marked the Council over the succeeding decades.

Of all those engagements - in development, education and health care, in human rights, in the struggles of women, in work for disar-

mament and peace - it was no doubt the Programme to Combat Racism which had the highest profile.

Controversy

PCR's focus on legally-entrenched racism in Southern Africa proved most controversial when it made symbolic grants to liberation movements - including the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe, SWAPO in Namibia and the African National Congress in South Africa - that were engaged in armed struggle against white-minority regimes.

The controversy often overshadowed the credibility this involvement earned the Council and its member churches among oppressed people in many places.

Women

While the struggle against racism focused on issues of justice and human rights, it was also part of a growing recognition of the need for churches to be inclusive communities.

An expression of this concern has been the WCC's consistent emphasis on the role of women in church and society (though the question of the ordination of women continues to divide member churches).





Even before the 1948 Amsterdam assembly, the WCC commissioned an international survey of the status of women in churches. In the 1970's and 1980's a further study on the Community of Women and Men in the Church drew unprecedented local participation. And the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women, which began at Easter 1988, will climax with an international festival, also in Harare, just before this year's WCC assembly.

The Churches in the World

Neither social action nor controversy was unknown to the Council when the storms over PCR broke out in the 1970s and 1980s.

From the beginning the Council has insisted on holding together the search for the unity of the church with the quest for the renewal of humankind. And, as a worldwide organisation, it has a significant role in international affairs.

Even before its official founding, the WCC's Geneva office was a central point. Through it, churches divided by the war maintained contact and aided people fleeing Nazi persecution. Just after the war, the WCC coordinated international

church involvement in European resettlement and reconstruction. Subsequently the Council played a major role in interchurch aid, and each year channelled millions of dollars to respond to disasters and to support development programmes in every part of the world.

Cold War

Much of the controversy around the Council over its first four decades related to the Cold War. The Amsterdam assembly's critique of capitalism and communism alike elicited negative coverage from both *The Wall Street Journal* and *Pravda*.

A 1950 WCC statement supporting UN intervention in Korea led Chinese member churches to withdraw from involvement in the Council until 1991. And superpower rivalry often lay behind criticism of the WCC's outspoken support of the hopes and plans of the newly independent countries from which a growing number of its member churches came.

Meanwhile, increasing participation in the WCC of church leaders from Eastern and Central European socialist countries led to charges that the Council was unconcerned about the persecution of 'under-

ground" Christians in the Soviet Union. Indeed, critics accused the WCC of supporting communism.

Many disputed the WCC's policy of relating officially to those churches in communist countries whose leaders were allowed some freedom for contacts and travel abroad, with the consequence that the Council's public stance often looked unbalanced - sharply critical of the West, silent or at best muted in criticizing the East.

Others would argue that, for all its limits, this policy gave oppressed churches an opening to the outside that eventually helped to bring about the collapse of totalitarian governments.

Future

The 1990s have not brought the peaceful and prosperous world many dreamed of in the first flush of euphoria over the demolition of the Berlin Wall. A growing number of voices now suggest the major issue for the Council as it begins its second 50 years is the promise and peril of globalization.

In short, what does the vision of fellowship which has been at the heart of the WCC's search for unity over the past 50 years have to say to the stark realities of the version of one world community fostered by today's global economic, financial and media powers? That will be one of the main questions on the agenda of the WCC's eighth assembly in Harare later this year. How the world's churches answer will, to a large extent, determine the degree to which the Council continues to provide a cutting edge at the point where faith and life intersect.

PAST WCC ASSEMBLIES

NO.	YEAR	PLACE	THEME
First	1948	Amsterdam, Netherlands	"Man's Disorder and God's design"
Second	1954	Evanston, USA	"Christ - the Hope of the World"
Third	1961	New Delhi, India	"Jesus Christ - the Light of the World".
Fourth	1968	Uppsala, Sweden	"Behold, I Make All things New".
Fifth	1975	Nairobi, Kenya	"Jesus Christ Frees and Unites"
Sixth	1983	Vancouver, Canada	"Jesus Christ - the Life of the World"
Seventh	1991	Canberra, Australia	"Come, Holy Spirit - Renew the Whole Creation".
Eighth	1998	Harare, Zimbabwe	"Turn to God - Rejoice in Hope"

Training for Sunday School Teachers of Vellore Organised at Ranipet

The Synod Department of Christian Education organised a two day training programme for all the Sunday School Superintendents and senior teachers of Vellore Diocese in V.R.V. Girls Hr. Sec. School Compound, Ranipet on 27th and 28th February 1988. Nearly 110

The Diocesan Vice President Rev. Venson Karunakaran with his team organisers Rev. Sathu Satya Raj, Rev. Issac Arulmani, Rev. Sharma Nithyanandam, Rev. Gerard and Miss Grace made appropriate arrangements for the raining programme.



In his welcome address Rev. Venson expressed his concern that children ministry to was an urgent priority in the Diocese.

The Director Rev. B.D. Prasada Rao exhorted the Sunday School teachers that children's ministry was a divine call and a noble responsibility. All the resource

Curriulum, Characteristics of a Sunday School Teacher, Organisation and Administration of a local Sunday School Unit were discussed.

There were a number of opportunities for the participants to spend time in prayer and rededication. Many of the participants in the plenary session said the program gave them lot of encouragement and new knowledge. They were excited to go back to their Sunday Schools with a new zeal and motivation for renewal. In the closing service all the teachers rededicated themselves and they all took a somn oath to help the children to grow in the spirit of the Lord as pillars of future Church.

Sunday School teachers and a few young pastors participated in the programme. Rev. G. Devakadhacham, Rev. Hannibal Cabral, Rev. C.V. Theodore, Rev. C.H. Vasantha Rao, Rev. Venson Karunakaran, Rev. Isaac Arulmani were the resource persons new inspiration and a comprehensive knowledge about Sunday School ministry were imparted to the participants.

persons with their respective disciplines contributed to lead the participants towards renewalk and re-orientation of their commitment to the children's ministry. Lot of new insights about the Sunday School ministry like Biblical and Historical Foundations of Sunday Schools, Importance of Comprehensive



LESSLIE NEWBIGIN - AN EPISCOPAL ROLE MODEL

SUNDAR CLARKE*

Called to Episcopacy

Many bishops have come and gone, but few could be of the calibre of James Edward Lesslie Newbigin. Episcopacy, was no honour to him but he honoured episcopacy. I take this opportunity to write about him because we have been close and intimate friends. It began by being his neighbour in bishop's house and working as a presbyter in his diocese. This was for a period of five years when we walked into each other's homes. Then, I had the privilege of working under him as the diocesan secretary and later became a very unworthy successor of a very worthy bishop.

From the very beginning he took episcopacy as a calling from God and felt faithful to his commitment and calling. When the diocesan elections took place in Madras he was in Geneva and he never asked to be the bishop of Madras nor lobbied for this position. It was just the decision of the people and God called him to this great office. He always acted worthy of God's calling. Very early in his ministry as bishop of Madras, when the C.S.I. Synod met in Kottayam in January 1966, he was almost unanimously elected as the Moderator of the C.S.I. This great man who was called and committed to episcopacy had the grace to stand up and decline the election, giving room for an Indian colleague. This is something that can hardly be found today. Working with him made it very clear that in his calling he prioritized "to minister and not to be ministered to". His episcopal calling enabled him to fit his life in God's plan and purpose.

The Doulos Model

Lesslie Newbigin chose to be a servant of the servant Lord. He never chose to hanker and run after

Episcopacy rather episcopacy hankered and ran after him. From a village pastor in 1947, he was chosen and consecrated bishop of the Madurai Ramnad diocese on the 27th of September 1947. He was the only C.S.I. bishop to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of his consecration. He then left India to work for the international Missionary Council and played a great role in the unification of this council with the World Council of Churches. Again, towards the end of 1964 he was the very obvious choice for the bishopric of Madras and duly installed in October 1965. Again, this servant of God never worked for the Bishopric of Madras but was chosen by people of God and the C.S.I. In both Madurai and Madras he proved to be a workaholic. It is said that once his son John did not find time to talk to his father at home and so queued up in the diocesan office to get his father's time and attention! He was a bishop who frequently ran from the house to the office! I am an eye witness to this.

The most impressive fact in this servant of God was his humility. My seat as diocesan secretary was just outside the Bishop's room. He would frequently walk up to me and consult me for minor decisions. There was a bell to ring but he dealt with me not through the bell but by walking up for consultation. More often than not, these consultations were not necessary, but he was keen and perceptive to Indian feelings and thinking and consulted me and later my successor Mr. Simpson Rajarathnam. I learned a great deal of humility from bishop Newbigin and later learned that *a consultative role rather than an authoritarian role was the model for a Bishop.*

Lesslie Newbigin was a man of great humility and a meaningful prayer life. It was not just the traditional "I will pray for you", but always maintained a little diary with prayer jottings. When I visited him in Birmingham, he would pull out his prayer diary and check on the list of clergy and update their addresses. Humility and prayerfulness contributed much to the depth of his spirituality. In this I must pay high tribute to his wife Helen Newbigin who partnered him as a yoke-fellow in the servant role for the master and his prayer life. She was truly a child of God, fully committed to God and to the bishop. She was very protective of him and never allowed anyone to disturb him when he had his weekly quiet morning.

Episcopacy contextualized

Bishop Newbigin was *a man of the people and for the people. He was a people's Bishop. He was primus inter pares.* He did his very best to give time for people irrespective of where they came from. He would often try to keep to time and never liked people hanging around doing nothing in the diocesan office. His love for people took him to skills in communication. Though a Britisher, he had the great ability of communicating to the villager in his Tamil and to the scholar in Tamil scholarship. If listening to him in church without seeing him, his pronunciation and enunciation was typical of a south Indian Tamlian. This was a great art and he spared no pains in learning to communicate effectively. For some time he had a Tamil Pundit to listen to his Tamil reading. Once, my wife and I were called to listen to his speech at a big Tamil conference on the Marina Beach. It was superb.

* Former bishop in the diocese of Madras

His love for people took him beyond linguistic dimensions. It acquired ecumenical dimensions. He started a small ecumenical loan funds for building urban churches for the Marthomites, Lutherans and the C.S.I. His peoples relationships took him beyond the frontiers of the protestant Church. He maintained very warm and cordial relationships with the Roman Catholic Archbishop of madras - Mylapore. This lead to a joint venture of serving the urban poor and they jointly started the Madras Christian Council for Social Services. Through this joint venture excellent work was done for the urban needy. His identification with people took him to political leaders such as Annadurai and Karunanithi. They were his friends.

Theologian Par Excellence

It could be said that *he was a man with a big heart and a brilliant mind*. He met with all the clergy and shared his theological brilliance with clarity and simplicity. He was a speaker in great demand and was called all over the world to share different theological perspectives. Even latterly, he was frequently in demand to speak at conferences and he had to limit himself to be back with Mrs.. Newbigin and care for

her. In his clear lucid theological scholarship, he saw "mission as Faith in Action". Mission as grounded in the Gospel and History. Faith was always in the context of Secular history. To Lesslie Newbigin theology and Missiology were the breath of his nostrils. He was greatly disturbed by the prevailing religious pluralism of the west and frequently spoke of "Western paganism". His Missiology centered around the Gospel, history, the world and issues like peace and justice. His missiology did not exclude liberation theology but was incisive on the grounds that its eschatology "does not face adequately the facts of sin and death and that it's evolutionary picture of the future of humankind is inadequately realistic as compared with the apocalyptic view of the New Testament. We must also look critically at the other end of liberation theology - its espitomology," says Newbigin in his book *"The Open Secret"* (Revised Edition)

lesslie Newbigin was a maestro in theology and more in particular, missiology. He was a rare theological find, a missiologist and a theologian on wheels. It started with a breath taking "South India Diary",

moved to "Household of God" and burst into "The Good Shepherd", then a critique of "Honest to God" and other flood of theological books. His "Gospel in a Pluralistic Society" was a sincere missiological effort to "re-evangelize" the west. His popular book, "The other side of 1984" was a serious challenge to Christians and more particularly to western Christians, to grow into sound Bible based Evangelism. "The Unfinished Agenda" printed and later further enlarged (at the request of the German Churches) is perhaps the most masterly effort of a breathtaking autobiography. It could be called an *autobiography par excellence*. His articles and essays are beyond count.

Conclusion

Lesslie Newbigin, we the members of the Church of South India, lift up our hears in humble thanksgiving to God for a godly life and for being an episcopal role model to us. Beloved one of God, we salute you. It will take a long time before the universal church could find another Lesslie Newbigin. While thanking God for your life and witness, we thank God for Helen Newbigin and the family. □

Excerpts from Bishop Newbigin's Writings

Human life as we know it, depends upon certain orders and forms and structures which are given. There are times and seasons, weeks and months and years. There are the political structures of nation, community and village. There are cultural forms, ethical forms, religious traditions which we cannot ignore and to which we are very largely bound to conform. These things provide a certain shape and order for human life. We are not random atoms, or loose grains of sands in a sand bag. We find already given, before we start to think, that there are structures which to some extent rule our lives, give them form and order, and protect them from chaos. All these things are created by God and it is only in Christ that they "hold together" (I Cor.1:15-17)

The heart of the matter is this: *The Cross of Jesus*. That is the only thing that can provide us with our unshakble standing ground. Don't try to take your stand anywhere else. Don't take your stand on anything you have done or intend to do. Don't take your stand on the fact that you are a christian, or a protestant, or an evangelical, or a catholic, or an 'ecumenical'. Don't boast of anything except the Cross. The Cross is the place where the whole world is brought under the judgement and mercy of God. The Cross is the place where we know that the whole world is in rebellion against God, and that God has bound the whole world, to himself with an undying love. To those who understand and accept it, the Cross is the beginning of a new kind of life, a life of faith. Working through love, a life of free loving service to all men for Christ's sake. The Cross is the place where, I and all things come to the end of the road and are put on a new road.

The Holy Eucharist

REV. Dr. MANI CHACKO*

The Holy Eucharist has been very central to the worship of the church ever since its inception. The word 'eucharist' itself derives from the Greek, meaning "thanksgiving". The name 'eucharist' refers to the central prayers in the rite, whereby God is above all thanked for the works of creation, redemption, accomplished through Christ and in the Holy Spirit.

1. The Holy Eucharist in Biblical Scholarship

The New Testament contains four accounts of what Jesus did and said at the Last Supper:

Matthew	26:26-30
Mark	14:22-25
Luke	22:14-20
I Corinthians	11:23-26

All these references agree that the Latest Supper took place on the night when he was betrayed.

The Holy Eucharist has been a matter of discussion among Biblical Theologians. A few of the issues/observations are in order here:

A) What was the Original Meal?

(a) Was it a Passover Meal?

According to Mark 14:12-17, Matthew 26:17-20; Luke 22: 7-14, it seems to be a Passover meal. But according to John, the Fourth Gospel, the events of trial and crucifixion took place on the day of preparation of the Passover. (John 13:1; 18:28; 19:14; 19:31). So according to John the last meal cannot have been a Passover Meal.

Views :

(a) The most radical of the views is that the Last Supper has no historical foundation at all, and that Christianity took over its tradition of meal from Greek Mystery Cults.

(b) The second view that both the Synoptic Gospels and John's are right. Chwolson argued that in the year of the death of Jesus, the Passover fell on a Sabbath, which would affect the Sabbath law. So, the Pharisees brought the Passover forward one day, so that it would fall on Friday, and it was that Passover which Jesus and disciples observed.

On the other hand, it was suggested that the Sadducees, who were the priestly party, left the Passover on the Sabbath, and it was that Passover, people were going to celebrate, according to John.

So, actually, there would have been two celebrations of Passover, one by Pharisaic Party and another by Sadducean party. It is the Pharisaic celebration which is probably described in Synoptics and the Sadducean in John.

(b) Was it a Kiddush?

'Kiddush' means 'consecrating, a sanctifying a hallowing'. The Kiddush was a ceremony by which the Sabbath was set apart.

Outline of the Ceremony

(a) Lighting of the Sabbath light by the woman of the house.

(b) Kiddush meal

(c) White Table cloth. In front of the father, there are two leaves and a jug of wine.

(d) After prayer, the father drinks from the cup and passes it round the family, and even the women and children partake of it.

(e) Hands are washed.

(f) Bread is broken and shared out.

(c) Was it a Chaburah meal?

A Chaburah was a society of likeminded people. The Pharisees, for instance, called themselves a

Chaburah. Such societies sometimes had meals together. It is suggested that Jesus and the Twelve constituted a Chaburah and that this was their fellowship meal.

(d) Was it an Essene Meal?

C.H. Turner suggests, in the year Jesus died, the disciples in their despair never kept the Passover at all. When in the next year the Passover came round again, their one memory of the last Passover was in fact the last meal in the Upper Room. They looked back on it as their Passover, and so came to identify the Passover and the last meal.

B. Different Views

(a) Agape, the Love Feast

To begin with, the Lord's Supper began as a Love Feast. It was a real meal. The word for Supper' is further proof of this. The word is *deipnon*. To the west, Supper is a light meal. But in Greece and in Palestine the *deipnon* was the evening meal, and it was the only main meal of the day.

But later, the *agape* began to change. It became separated from the Lord's Supper. In the first place, it became a charity meal; then it became a meal for old women; then a meal which the rich provide after the sacrament; then a Charity Supper. Thus *agape* and Lord's Supper were completely separated.

Agape became an occasion of drunkenness and gluttony and social distinctions. Hence, the eucharist was separated from *agape*.

(b) Development within the conception of the Eucharist itself.

(i) How is the presence of Christ in the Eucharist to be thought of, and in particular what does it mean to say that the bread is his body and the cup is his blood?

* He is Professor of Old Testament at Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Chennai

(ii) Are we to say that Christ's sacrifice is remembered, or repeated, in the Eucharist?

Ignatius - Bread and wine are symbols of love and faith and the flood of life eternal.

Justin Martyr - Bread and wine become Christ's body "through the prayer of the Eucharist.

Irenaeus - When the prayer is said over the bread, it acquires something which previously it had not, and spiritually it becomes the body of Christ.

Martin Luther

(i) It is a matter of the grace of God for a man who is conscious of his sin.

(ii) It was not the sacrament which set a man right with God; it was the faith which a man took to the sacrament and drew from the sacrament.

(ii) For **Luther**, the presence of Jesus Christ in the sacrament was very real.

Zwingli

(i) Eucharist is a demonstration of the unity of those who partake it, and a pledge to live a life of unity.

(ii) It indicates remembrance - the sacrament is the remembrance of a sacrifice made once and for all, never to be repeated, never needing to be repeated.

John Calvin

(i) In the Lord's Supper, we do not only remember Christ, we also receive Christ.

(ii) It is Christ himself who through his Spirit brings himself to us.

(C) Two Theories

(a) **Transubstantiation:** This theory advocates that the substances of bread and wine were transformed at the time of consecration into the substance of Christ's body and blood, even though the outward appearances of the elements were not altered.

(b) **Consubstantiation:** The explanation here is that, after the

words of institution were spoken, there are two realities copresent under the appearances of bread and wine; the food themselves, which could be touched and tasted by senses, and Christ himself who could be known by faith and experienced through the power of grace.

D. The BEM Document

In the BEM document which is otherwise known as the "Lima Text", the "eucharist" or Lord's Supper is seen as "a gift from the Lord" and it is said that "every Christian receives the gift of salvation through communion in the body and blood of Christ".

The "meaning of the eucharist" is expounded as

- (a) "thanksgiving to the father"
- (b) "memorial of Christ"
- (c) "invocation of the Spirit"
- (d) "Communion of the faithful"
- (e) "meal of the kingdom"

The text speaks of "Christ's real, living and active presence in the eucharist" which is "the living and effective sign of Christ's sacrifice, accomplished once for all on the cross and still operative on behalf of all humankind".

II. The Holy Eucharist in Christian Worship.

The Holy Eucharist is central to our worship. And sometimes it is useful to remind ourselves of why this should be so

I. Firstly, Eucharist is central to our worship, because Jesus commanded it. It was Jesus himself who specifically requested that his followers would repeat this action.

"Do this in remembrance of me" he said to his disciples in the Upper Room. The present imperative of the verb, 'do this, in Greek suggests that the more accurate translation is 'keep on doing this'. Infact, this notion of perpetuity is reinforced by St. Paul in his letter to the church at Corinth, where he informs the Corinthians that the sacrament is to be continued 'until he comes' - till Christ comes again.

It was never the way of Jesus to encumber men and women with ritual which was not beneficial. He despised the ritual washings and cleansings of the Pharisees. He referred to the scribes and Pharisees who paid their ritual titles, but neglected the more important matters of law - justice, mercy and fidelity - as 'blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!.

Jesus knew that a man can perform all the ritual actions which his religion demands and yet still be as remote in heart from God! The pharisee who prayed outside the temple was like that. He kept a fast twice a week. He offered to God a tenth of whatever came his way. All the ritual acts he performed impeccably. But it was the despised publican and not the self-righteous pharisee who left the temple justified before God.

Jesus deprecated ritual for its own sake. Yet it was the same Jesus, who with his disciples gathered around a table, took bread and wine, and said 'Do this'.

The conclusion must be, that he had good reason for doing it, and that obedience to his dying command would be to their benefit and ours.

So when we come to the Holy Table, we do it to comply with the will of Jesus. We do it because he commanded us to do it. We do it in obedience to him.

II. Secondly, the Eucharist is central to our worship because it takes us to the very heart of our faith. For the sacrament is a vivid reminder of our Lord's death.

It was not his birth, his teaching, his life, that Jesus wanted to have remembered. He wanted his death to be remembered particularly, and the sacrament was the means, which he appointed to do it.

But why should anyone choose to have his death remembered? The reason was that his death had tremendous significance for us all. St. Paul expressed this significance when he wrote, not just 'Christ gave

himself' but that he 'gave himself for our sins'.

As we partake in the sacrament we remember how Christ gave himself for us, for me. We remember the cruel nails and the thorns. He died to do something for us which we could not do for ourselves.

The cross is the 'bolt falling' on us, to bring us to our senses, and to hold out to us the possibility of a life of a different quality.

The sacrament is central to us because it reminds us that right at the heart of our faith, there is a cross.

III. Thirdly, the Eucharist is central because it is a stimulus to service and humility:

It is impossible to come to this table without remembering that it was on the night of the Last Supper that Jesus took a basin and towel and girded himself, and washed the feet of his disciples, telling them that he was setting them an example which they had to follow. It is impossible to contemplate the self-giving of Christ, without finding the inspiration and motivation for our self-giving for others.

As we partake in the sacrament, the springs of humility and compassion are replenished within us. Celebration and service go hand in hand. This one is the inspiration of the other.

St. Jerome once remarked. "I had to give up writing my commentary on Ezekiel, and nearly all my study. The crowds of homeless made we want to turn the words of scripture into deeds, not just saying holy things, but doing them".

At this table, we meet the Christ who came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many'. We remember that to follow him means 'not only saying holy things, but doing them'.

Every week more than 200 million people meet around the Lord's table - probably the most numerous regular gathering of human beings around a common theme this world knows.

A Roman Catholic theologian from Sri Lanka once said, "if this act of thanksgiving could be vitalised into a true sacrament of communion, it would be the most effective means of bringing about the radical revolution which our Christian faith requires. This would not only bring that sense of freedom and responsibility..., but also the realization of those values of justice, truth, love, freedom, equality and peace which make up God's design for human society".

This act of ours, without a deep sense of responsibility under God can become superficial and dangerous.

IV. Fourthly, the Eucharist is central, because it is a stimulus to Unity.

Jesus, while handing the plate and the cup said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves". - as one community, with a need for one another, with a common commitment for making the world a better place. Yet, we celebrate the Holy Communion as a divided community".

The things that apostle Paul found so upsetting about the Corinthian church was that, as a congregation, they were divided and in danger of falling.

Some said, 'I belong to Paul'

Some said, 'I belong to Cephas'

Some said, 'I belong to Appollos'.

There were some who considered themselves better than others - because they possessed a spectacular gift called 'Speaking in tongues'. Those who practised regarded those who did not, as spiritually inferior.

These divisions should not be and cannot happen at the Lord's Table, for right from the beginning, it has always been an act of fellowship. It is the place where Christians assemble not as individuals, but as a family. Here we are one. Class, Wealth and Position have no room here. All who come here are friends of one Lord, and therefore friends of one another. To come to the Lord's Table is to recognise that we belong to each other.

Even the weakest and the lowliest should feel cared for or wanted at the Lord's Table. The church is not a club, where individuals have

their say. Rather it is a fellowship of believers where one exists for the other. One may have a strong opinion - others may not see that view point. The Lord's Supper should make us realise that we are one and should make us soften our view and hear others for betterment of the church. Only when we stand united, anything could be achieved. There is a saying 'Unity is Strength'.

Conclusion

As BEM document put it, the Holy Eucharist is a gift from our Lord. We celebrate it because the Lord commanded it, because it takes us to the heart of our faith; because it is a stimulus to service; because it is a stimulus to unity.

Albert Orsborn had written a beautiful hymn:

My life must be Christ's broken bread

My love his outpoured wine

A cup o'erfilled, a table spread

Beneath his name and sign

That other souls, refreshed and fed

May share his life through mine.

May this be our prayer as we partake in the Holy Eucharist, especially as we commemorate the passion of our Lord. Amen.

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**The General Secretary
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Isaiah 59:4

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803/92 'Deepali' Nehru Place
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Dates :
September 9-13, 1998
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**National Forum
for Reconciliation,
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Invitation based on Selection

Of Visions and Missions 2000

Bishop Sam Amirtham*

"Vision is our mission", so goes the publicity campaign of an optical company. They provide vision to the long-sighted and the short-sighted. Surely the glasses improve the vision of many a client there.

"Mission 2000" is the title of so much mail one gets these days, often from some para-church and fundamentalist publications. Most of these give the impression that 2000 AD is going to be crucial point in human history. Some project the end of planet Earth; others foresee the Armageddon, and yet others the return of our Lord and the Second Coming. The purpose of these publications is a laudable one to put some fear and fright in people's heart and bring them to repentance and prepare them 'to meet the Lord'.

Interesting as it is, there is no Biblical basis for such projections and calculations (Acts 1:7). Bishop Usher taking the length of days from Adam and Eve and all patriarchs, dated creation at about 4000 B.C. It is 2000 years since Jesus Christ was born. So, some argue, it is 6000 years since creation. The sabbatical millennium is around the corner. One day being one thousand years for God (Ps. 90:3), after six days of work, the Lord is going to rest on the sabbath. Original chaos may destroy the cosmos again.

The Statesman of 30th March 1998 carried an article on microbes and said "Micro organisms constitute a very antique group of living organisms which appeared on earth's surface almost 3000 million years ago. Many Scientists assume that microbes were the first living organ-

isms on earth". Paleontologists date human life, in its nearest present form to a period 50 million years ago.

When I was a student of physics we were taught that it was about 50,000 years ago that life appeared on earth. New evidence has been thrown up to correct the age of human kind. This is said here only to indicate that in the long march of time and history six thousand years is but a dot, without any particular significance in itself. Some scientists have told us, if time from the beginning is 24 hours of a clock we are just 2 minutes (120 seconds) before the clock strikes midnight. The point is the universe came into being with Sun and its planets including earth, possibly billion of years ago and these may go on for millions of years yet. Too mind boggling except for astrophysicists and palaeontologists!

It implies the earth will go on for some more millions of years (Gen. 8:22). The earth and its people, by the promises of God will survive 2000 AD possibly making greater progress in science and technology, in peace-making and eco friendly care of the earth. The social, political, technological and economical contours of the next millennium is going to be much more complex than the 20th century, the century of a quantum jump into the technological and scientific marvels and mysteries. This is an optimistic view and needless to say, that there are those of pessimistic disposition and prophets of doom.

2000 years of Church history is but a tiny part of the history of human kind; but it is only right and proper that believers think about church's mission beyond AD 2000. Pardon the diversion.

My interest here is to share with readers some of the different visions of Mission 2000, coming from within the C.S.I. And how such visions can be dreamed up and sharpened even in the two years before A.D. 2000 run out.

i. An Evaluation Commission appointed by the CSI under the convenorship of the Rev. Dr. K.C. Abraham, has the following to say about the vision for the church. Making 18 recommendations* for the consideration of the Synod and highlighting the preferential options of the church to the Dalits, Women, the marginalised and the powerless, the interim report concludes with a quotation from the Rev. Dr. Dyanchand Carr and a Biblical vision.

"Our God given role is fundamentally that of being keepers and interpreters of the Gospel Tradition.

The real agents for change are the Poor in Spirit. If we achieve such a humble self understanding and start giving expression to that, almost all the problems we face will disappear. But, of course, a lot of work needs to be done. Starting with Sunday school, Youth, Adults, and confirmation courses going upto theological education and continuing education for the pastors".

Three focal images in the N.T. that shape Christian discipleship are

* He was till recently the bishop in South Kerala diocese.

* Another comprehensive set of 49 recommendations (7 each in 7 areas of mission and ministry) were made in a consultation held in UTC Bangalore in Jan. 1997. See Greater Peace, Deeper Fellowship, and Fuller Life, CLS Madras 1997 pp: 351-358

community, the Cross and New creation. They provide us with memory and vision, a motive for action and hope". (South India Churchman, March '98. p16)

ii. Bishop M.I. Kesari Messiah Das of Kanyakumari diocese gave me a little booklet which contains his Vision of the Mission 2000 rather as what he would see as priorities for the next 2 or 3 years of his episcopal ministry (copies are available with him). I am impressed by his singleness of purpose to renew the diocese spiritually, of his commitment to a wholesome development and growth of the diocese, from evangelism to eradication of poverty. And yet, more important it seemed to me the very idea of the vision than the content of the vision, A boldness to dream.

Personally I learn from this his example that the length of one's episcopacy is irrelevant to the capacity to see visions, visions of renewal and dreams of change. What some can achieve in 15 years, some can do in five years, to give a direction and perspective for mission and ministry in the diocese. A bishop's vision provides a guiding principle to the people. And indeed, 'where there is no vision people perish'. (Pr. 29:18).

iii) My friend the Rev. G. Dyvasirvadam, the new General Secretary of the CSI, is a good conversationalist and as I discover, is also a good dreamer. I was moved to hear of his vision, that the CSI should move from 31.12.1999 to 01.01.2000 as a reconciled community. All court cases in the CSI withdrawn, all disciplinary actions by the bishops withdrawn through repentance and forgiveness. And this reconciliation process, has been already initiated in a few dioceses.

An example of what can be achieved by a spirit of reconciliation and pastoral perspective, he told me

with excitement. There is a huge bungalow behind the CSI Centre, which has been rented to Mr. Frank P. Fernandes about 30 years ago, when Ms. G.Spreadbury was the CSITA Manager. He is a Roman Catholic lay leader of the Thangasari Community in Madras: An architect himself, I am told he owns *Tangi* Towers and other property in Madras. An eviction case is going on for about 20 years. Our General Secretary took the initiative to meet him, befriended him, and when the need of the building was convincingly put to him he understood and agreed to leave the house. The keys were handed over in two week's time. The Madras Diocese (to which the property belongs under the CSITA and the Synod are going to start the Bishop Newbigin Memorial Research and Study Centre, in that building. However if the vision of reconciliation is to be realised by 31.12.1999, it is time that all bishops, pastors and lay leaders take the initiative now; study the issues patiently, listen to the complaints of concerned parties, re-establish fairness and justice, and be generous towards those who offended them, and for the sake of Kingdom's blessedness and happiness become peace makers. The cobwebs of party politics, unhelpful egos, self seeking of power etc., must be cleaned up in each households of faith, congregations, dioceses and in the synod. It is not so much the **revised constitution, but renewed institutions and reopened hearts, that would facilitate this process.**

Dyva speaks passionately about this vision of reconciliation within the CSI, almost as an obsession. A magnificent obsession indeed!

iv. Moderator, the Most Rev. William Moses has a dream of getting the 'dreamers' in the CSI together to share and shape the

vision for the CSI for the next 25 years; Dreamers who are in touch with the grass roots, he insists. His own eco-vision, tribal-vision and involvement with the whole multifaith community in Coimbatore are well known. He has also a vision of a new spirituality among all the CSI presbyters, the ministers of word and sacrament and a vision of the effective witness of the new Board for Diaconal Ministry. Readers will remember the VELCOM vision of a former Moderator, Bishop Victor Premasagar and the new life that came through this to many congregations.

Moderator Moses hopes to get feed back through representative leaders, a feed back on the hopes and aspirations of the people of CSI at large. It is a people's vision of the whole people of God in the CSI that the Moderator is seeking. Could we not speak of a people's vision of the Church's mission in the next Century? Infact, this is the promise of our God through the prophet Joel 3:1-3.

"I will pour out my spirit on all (hu)mankind, Yours Sons and daughters shall prophesy. Your old men (and women) shall dream dreams. And your young men (and women) see visions. Even on the slaves, men and women, will I pour out my spirit in those days".

We are in the Lenten season looking upto the cross on calvary, and the empty tomb beyond. Whatever be the CSI vision, it cannot but stand in the shadow of the cross, the vicarious suffering and the death of the Son of God for the sins of the world. Those who follow Him are called to carry their own crosses voluntarily, opting suffering and self denial for the sake of others, for the sake of the abundant life for others. This magnificent vision then will be a *Cruciform Vision*.

WISE AS SERPENTS

Ebe Sunder Raj*

Letters and reports from the field workers are always a source of great inspiration and encouragement to know the way our Lord is working in our fields. We thank the Lord for them.

However there are also reports and letters that speak of harassment, opposition and persecution for the gospel work. These reports are increasing in number in recent days. Such harassments, opposition and attacks are bound to increase in the days to come. In this situation, we as Christian witnesses have new responsibilities. I am writing a few thoughts mainly for leaders of christian organizations:

a) We need to encourage prayer on behalf of all our front line staff who face opposition and difficulties in increasing measure.

b) We need to avoid sensational reporting. This has particularly become the habit of many evangelicals. We the leaders are not aware of the immense risk we create for our own field staff. Most of the leaders live secure in cities and most move around in motor car safely. Therefore, we do not realize the amount of risk we create for our barefoot field workers who live in remote and interior fields and who need the goodwill of the people around them for their survival.

Sensational and exaggerated reporting of achievements have become the norm because many donors and supporters (particularly from the West) are used to superlative salesman language and to win their favour, the Indian organizations use one-up-manship vocabulary.

There are some Indian ministries who circulate exclusively in the West, exciting reports and news letters which are carefully avoided currency in India. Such magazines claim astronomical achievements. The fact is many of these magazines end up

in the IMA office with request from donors for confidential reference. It breaks our hearts to realize how many Christian ministries compromise with half truths and non-truths.

The more serious fact is that all these tall reports and exaggerated statistics are picked up in the West and quoted by communal organizations in India as documented evidence of foreign funded massive proselytizing activity by the Indian christians. These include *inter alia* the 700 global plans and the 200 Indian plans of evangelism, etc.

I had direct access to some of these documents and allegations as submitted by communal forces to the Government. These submissions result in strong prejudice and serious repercussions from the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary against our demands like Dalit Christian Reservation Rights, Repeal of Anti-conversion Laws, Minority Institutions Rights, etc. etc. All of them (the Court, the Government and political parties) in response to our above legitimate demands quote our flashy magazines and exaggerated reports as evidence of our illegitimate activities.

The most disturbing fact in all these is, these himalayan claims of achievement and data are meant only for the consumption of our gullible donors and not for our opponents or the Indian Government. We all know in our hearts that these reports, data and goals contain very little reality in them.

As a consequence the sufferers are the sincere front-line grassroots workers who receive all the harassment, beatings, life threats, molestation and deaths. IMA is handling a few cases of deaths of front-line evangelists including the 22-year-old John Rajiv who was stabbed to death two weeks ago in Muzaffarpur, Bihar.

We need to stop this sensationalism to save our front line workers. It is a deplorable fact that most western funding goes to Indians who sensationalize, not to those who evangelize. It is deception, not dedication, that wins; advertising, not soul winning, that counts in the missions market today. Many of these donors do come to IMA but very late only for postmortem of their partnership with some obscure Indian who was their hero till yesterday.

The internationals need to ask national churches and others in advance as to which are credible Indian ministries to support, when, where, whom, how, how much, etc.

c) We need to encourage more of socially and culturally relevant, evangelism. We thank God for every form of effort and God can use any method. However in the context of the current communal sensitivity, one wonders if the high profile, high decibel international tele-evangelists crusades in our cities is the best mode of presenting Christ to our contemplative country men. Our front-line field workers see more miracles and healings happen all the time than all the high-tech healers and prosperity vendors put together.

It has been proven consistently by researches that these crusades-lasting results are dismally low, compared to the one to one, house to house and village to village evangelism. It is also a known fact that the many (if not all) of these crusades are organized, not because the local people desperately felt the need for it, but because the international preacher wanted to finance these crusades to be held for him. There are many Indian agents who are paid by these preachers just to do this job of organizing crusades and seminars all over India whether India needs them or not.

* He is General Secretary, India Missions Association

Our intention here is not to underrate any of God's work. God uses every method. Our great concern is the adverse effect it results in. Such crusades (though bringing some blessings to some people) reinforce the average Indian mindset that christianity is a western religion which can survive in India only with imported messages and messengers. In recent days we have seen a spurt of serious opposition and attack wherever such crusades were held. With all humility we request our Indian and international brethren to review this matter.

Suffering, persecution and martyrdom are natural parts of our call and they are very great virtues in the Lord's service but not when we force them on our co-workers because of our blunders or insensitivity. We are stewards of the Lord's work as well as the Lord's workers.

d) We need to develop more social and contextual sensitivity. We have antagonised vast segments of our societies in India against our gospel work because of our extraction methods. We piously misquote II Corinthians 6:14 to our new believers and decree that forsaking one's parents, family or finance as the essential mark of one's entering the holy faith. The average Indian finds this atrocious. There are exceptional contexts where it may be scriptural to do so. But in most other

cases, it is our bigotry not the Bible that demands so.

We are now reaping the consequence of our sowing the seeds of social discord for years by our misconceived mission methods in India. Today the anti-christian forces quote this (to a great part, rightly so) as an example to show that gospel work is disruptive to family harmony in India. Most evangelists are unaware that this is a major cause for antagonism from the society.

e) We need to dissuade the rushing in of internationals into our mission fields.

With the liberalisation process (including provision of visa) being enhanced there is a rush from international christians to reach India. We are very grateful for their prayer, commitment and involvement. However their physical presence in our front-line mission fields is highly counter productive.

For want of cultural sensitivity they invariably make things very difficult for the native mission workers. Their actions are the best example of what the Bible calls as zeal without knowledge. Most of them in reality become active (but unaware) agents in creating enormous prejudice in the average Indian mind against the gospel and Indian gospel workers.

Increasing number of such international youngsters write directly to us. They neither come through

their local church nor mission. Most of them belong to the individualistic generation of the West. International loners can do very little help but do enormous harm for the gospel work in India. It is regrettable that some irresponsible churches and missions in India encourage them to come because of the dollar they carry. Such missions and churches do very great harm to the cause of the gospel in India.

We affirm the fellowship of saints, we believe in the universal body of Christ. However for the sake of social, cultural, communal sensitivity, we welcome only the official representatives of international churches and missions to come to India to help us, through and on the invitation of credible missions and churches in India. Most ideally such exchange of personnel should be done through the respective national alliances of missions (or churches).

Otherwise we sow the seeds of disintegration of the body of Christ both in India as well as overseas.

Our Lord wants us to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves especially in the new socio-political context in which we live and serve.

May our Lord grant us that wisdom and innocence. Let us pray for our persecuted brethren in our mission fields. □

Training in Mission & Evangelism



A self-initiated and spontaneous training in Mission - Evangelisation is being conducted in

the Nekhonda area, near Warnagal in the Karimnagar Dioceses of Andhra Pradesh. Under the leadership and planning of the area Leaders, a group of about 24 youngsters are given training every weekend for two months. Food is provided by fund raised locally from among the members of the Church.

Accommodation is provided in the church and the Mission Compound. travel expense is met by one's own congregation.

Four Pastors of the area help as Resource Persons....These young men and women are trained for: Work in their own Parish, or 'voluntary evangelistic activities around their congregation, or becoming full-time Evangelists, or with a Call, to serve the Church as Ministers.

(The Synod Council for Mission is planning for a vigorous training in Mission & Evangelisation (TIME) during this biennium for members at all levels.

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Letter of interest in the position may kindly be sent by courier to:
Murray Culshaw; 139/4 Domlur Layout, Domlur, Bangalore 560 071.

(Kindly write our phone numbers 080-5560003, 5543770 - on the cover)

Candidates considered to meet the basic requirements will be sent further information, a job description and an Application form for completion and return.

